

PATENT

PreCmolt
7B
MW

For: **BINDING PROTEIN**

DATE OF DEPOSIT: January 5, 2001

Dear Sir:

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Prior to examination on the merits, please amend the above-identified application as follows.

In the claims:

~~Please cancel claims 11 and 12 without prejudice.~~

Please insert the following claims:

N 21. A method for treating a patient infected with hepatitis C virus (HCV) comprising administering to said patient an amount of a protein having a molecular weight of about 24 kd, or a functionally equivalent variant or fragment thereof, and capable of binding to E2 of HCV, effective to reduce the infectivity of the virus.

22. A composition/comprising a protein having a molecular weight of about 24 kd, or a functionally equivalent/variant or fragment thereof, and capable of binding to E2 of HCV, in

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